

# MEMO

**TO:** Energy and Environment Committee

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**DATE:** February 3, 2005

**SUBJECT:** Solid Waste Chapter of the Regional Comprehensive Plan

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## **SUMMARY:**

Per Regional Council direction, SCAG staff is preparing a Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) to implement and promote policy objectives of the Regional Council, fulfill the new organizational Strategic Plan, and serve to assist outside parties in working within regional plans. One chapter of the RCP is the Solid Waste chapter.

At its December 15, 2004 meeting, the RCP Task Force reviewed current SCAG policies regarding solid waste and hazardous waste and began to create an action plan for the Solid Waste chapter. The RCP Task Force identified the need for a comprehensive integrated waste management plan to guide waste decisions in the region. The RCP Task Force also identified several areas where it recommends that the EEC review current policy. These areas regard nuclear power generating facilities, low level radioactive medical wastes, and the elimination of the use of nonrenewable resources. The RCP Task Force asked staff to report the Task Force's progress on the Solid Waste chapter to the Energy and Environment Committee.

## **BACKGROUND:**

At the December 15, 2004 meeting, SCAG staff presented the applicable SCAG policies related to solid waste and led a discussion on potential implementation actions to be included in the chapter. The Task Force contributed several potential actions. The most pressing concern that the Task Force identified is the need for a comprehensive integrated waste management system in the region. This type of system is needed to adequately plan for future waste disposal as well as to work together to divert waste from landfills through reducing the amount of products used, reusing products, and recycling products.

The RCP Task Force offered several additional actions, including:

- Using conversion technology as a way to divert waste from landfills;
- Implementing a construction management ordinance to mandate construction waste recycling;
- Expanding the number of governments with procurement policies that favor recyclable materials;
- Rewarding program implementation goals in place of strict numerical targets;
- Phasing out the use of hazardous materials; and
- Integrating regional plans with the State solid waste plans.



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The RCP Task Force identified several waste issues and recommends the EEC review these issues and establish policies to guide SCAG's work in the areas of:

- Working toward a reduction and elimination of the use of nonrenewable materials;
- Decommissioning nuclear power plants and prohibiting future nuclear power plants in the region; and
- Disposal options for low level radioactive medical wastes.

Over the next series of meetings, the RCP Task Force will review adopted policies in each chapter of the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) and provide input. Discussion will focus on the existing SCAG policies regarding the subject areas and how to craft an Action Plan that stakeholders can use to implement the regional policies.

The Solid Waste chapter describes the current conditions for solid waste management, including hazardous waste, and describes the objectives of regional solid waste planning. However, the major focus of this and the other RCP chapters is on specific actions for specific stakeholders. The actions are drawn from the SCAG adopted policies as committed in the:

- 2004 Regional Transportation Plan Program Environmental Impact Report,
- Solid Waste Task Force Report of April 1997, and
- Southern California Hazardous Waste Management Plan of July 1989.

Staff contacted SCAG's Solid Waste Task Force participants to solicit input in developing the outline for the Solid Waste chapter. Experts who responded were interested in addressing:

- conversion technologies,
- other solid waste facilities including transfer stations,
- rail transport of solid waste,
- universal waste (fluorescent light bulbs, batteries, etc.), and
- electronic waste.

One expert suggested that the outline include the hazardous waste policies recommended in the Southern California Hazardous Waste Management Plan. Another suggested reconvening the Solid Waste Task Force.



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